

who leads NATO's training of Afghan security forces. He not only talks of the 2014 date as it's established policy; he says he needs more resources and more military trainers just to get Afghanistan ready to provide for their own security by that date.

So we've gone from the military saluting President Obama and saying they could get it done by July 2011, to saying that current levels of personnel aren't adequate to get the job done in four more years' time.

Lieutenant General Caldwell also echoed what other officials have said, that the 2014 date comes not from the Oval Office or the Pentagon or the situation room, but was initially put forward by Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai.

But since when, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, does a foreign head of state set our goals? I thought U.S. foreign policy and decisions about our national security were made by the elected representatives of the American people.

The truth, Mr. Speaker, is that things have gotten far worse in Afghanistan since we committed more troops. Our troops are dying at a greater pace than at any other point in the 9 years of war. Civilian casualties are also on the rise. The Afghan people have little confidence in our mission and its ability to improve their lives. The insurgency remains as nimble and sophisticated as ever. Effective local government is barely in existence.

We've heard all the arguments before about why accelerated time tables supposedly don't work; that they embolden the enemy; that the insurgents will simply wait us out until the date of departure. But they're not waiting us out now. They effectively control vast swaths of the country, and the one thing that is giving them greater strength and moral authority is the continued presence of our combat troops on Afghan soil.

How much more do we have to fail before we change strategies, I ask? How many chances are we going to give this military occupation? How much patience are we supposed to have? I say, not a minute more, Mr. Speaker. I say it's time to bring our troops home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRATULATING JACINTO "ACE" ACEBAL ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, tonight I am so honored to recognize an outstanding public servant, Jacinto Acebal, or "Ace" as he is known by his friends. He will soon be retiring from the United States Postal Service after 45 years of service.

Ace has helped accomplish the United States Postal Service mission to provide efficient mail service to every address within our country. Ace has assisted not only individuals but also the needs of our small businesses in south Florida. In an area as busy and as diverse as south Florida, Ace never misses a beat.

As a testament to his dedication and tireless efforts, Ace was recently recognized by his colleagues at the Hispanic Organization of Postal Employees. It is indeed a tribute for an individual whose career has had such humble beginnings.

Proud of having been born in Cuba and never losing his yearning for a free and democratic Cuba, Ace also proudly served our country in the military serving in Vietnam. In fact, he is the most highly decorated Cuban American to have fought in Vietnam.

Ace joined the postal service after his service in 1968 as a letter carrier; and I'm proud to say that he employed the same focus, the same determination, the same patriotism that marked his distinguished military career. As a result, he impressed his superiors and rose through the ranks. Ace has held numerous managerial positions including supervisor, human resource specialist, and Hispanic program specialist.

In this last position he has also been an invaluable liaison to the Hispanic community. Ace is regularly interviewed by news outlets, and he helps promote postal service products and services to our diverse Hispanic community nationwide.

Ace has appeared on national news programs that have aired in Hispanic markets across the country. The United States Postal Service's Executive Committee has also presented Ace with a special recognition award for his media relations efforts.

Above all else, Ace has been an exemplary and active member in our south Florida community. The City of Miami Commission appointed him to the Miami Community Relations Board.

He's also a member of the Spanish American League Against Discrimination and has served on the greater Miami Hispanic Council and the United Way of Dade County subcommittee.

Ace has been awarded the Diversity Vice President Partnership Award, the Dot Sharpe Lifetime Achievement, and has been named Federal employee of the year. Simply put, Jacinto Acebal has been a tireless leader in our community and a shining example of professionalism and service. His talents will be sorely missed at the United States Postal Service. He leaves behind a wonderful legacy; and I join his many friends, family and peers in celebrating

his well-earned retirement. You have served our community well, Ace and I am lucky to count you as a friend. Congratulations, my friend.

ECONOMIC ISSUES: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. I come here to address the House on economic issues facing us this month and next month. And I come here to talk about the good, the bad and the ugly. First, the good.

The Federal Reserve Board is going to buy \$600 billion worth of long-term bonds, quantitative easing. This will increase America's share of the American market for manufacturers' goods. That's why it has been condemned by China, Germany and Japan, because they know it means moving jobs from Germany, Japan and China to the United States.

This is an effective tool that is reversible. We can expand the money supply now, and then the Federal Reserve Board can reverse its action when the economy improves. Therefore, it involves no increase in the money supply that is permanent and, of course, involves no increase in our national debt.

The unemployment rate is over 9.6 percent. We need to act to bring down that unemployment rate. And the Fed is to be commended. This does not mean that its decision is risk free. Just, given all the risk that we're confronted with, this is a good move. And the fact that the countries that are running giant trade surpluses with it have condemned us gives it an additional advantage.

Second, the bad. The tax proposals, and I focus here only on the tax proposals of the Simpson-Bowles proposal, they have offered three different versions of their tax proposal and I will address what they call the Wyden-Gregg approach. There are two other approaches, the zero plan, which is even worse than the one I'm going to describe, and a third option of basically doing nothing except inviting the Ways and Means Committee to earn their salary and to look at our tax law.

Now, I was anxious to embrace this proposal because we need to see shared sacrifice. We all are looking for a way to pay down the debt, and I, for one, was willing to embrace a program of shared sacrifice and austerity. But Messrs. Bowles and Simpson have given sacrifice a bad name by using our desire for shared sacrifice to disguise a giant tax cut for large corporations.

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It needs to be cut by a quarter. This in the name of increasing revenue. This in the name of austerity and shared sacrifice. No. This in the name of using the debt crisis as an opportunity to shift wealth and power and income

from the middle class to corporate elites and the very wealthy.

Now, it is true that they talk about reducing certain corporate tax expenditures, but only in vague terms, only to a small degree. It is basically a dramatic decline in corporate tax, in the revenue of the corporate income tax.

Now, finally on to the other. We have been told by our Republican colleagues on so many occasions that the worst thing we could do is increase taxes in the middle of a recession; yet the Republican proposals, all of them, involve a dramatic increase for working families going into effect this next year, namely by allowing the Making Work Pay Tax Credit, the so-called Obama tax cuts, \$800 for every working couple, \$400 for every working single, expire at the end of this year. I urge my colleagues to join with me in cosponsoring our colleague Scott Murphy's bill to extend this \$800/\$400 tax credit.

With all the talk of extending the Bush tax cuts, with all the talk for those who make more than a quarter million dollars a year, we should not forget that the Obama tax cuts expire at the end of this year, and for well more than half of all American families, the Obama tax cuts are more important than the Bush tax cuts.

Now, why is nobody even talking about extending the Obama tax cuts? Because no one with an income of over \$150,000 a year gets any of that benefit. So when we have a tax cut that is targeted at working families that is more important than the Bush tax cuts to over half of American families, we see this tax cut about to expire without any discussion from those who tell us that the worst possible thing would be to increase anyone's taxes in the middle of a recession. I do not want to hear about spending \$700 billion over the next 10 years to provide tax relief to the top 1 percent. I do not want to hear that from those who are talking about increasing taxes on more than half of America's working families. It is time to extend the Obama tax cut.

I look forward to working in a bipartisan way to provide tax relief to get this economy moving again and then to shift to fiscal austerity, but allowing the Obama tax cuts to expire and then cutting corporate income tax by one quarter is not the way to go.

ANOTHER DAY ON THE TEXAS BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it was just another day on the Texas border on October 1, 2010. A young couple, David and Tiffany Hartley, were on Falcon Lake.

Falcon Lake is a massive lake that borders Mexico in the State of Texas, an international border. They were on their jet skis, and they traveled across the international line into Mexico.

They had gone to see an old mission that was partially submerged in Falcon Lake.

On their way back coming into the United States, they were being chased by three boats full, obviously, of drug cartel members—later we learned they were the Zeta drug cartels—firing automatic weapons at David and Tiffany Hartley. David was shot in the back of the head. Tiffany tries to help, but they were still shooting, so she flees.

She comes back into the United States, and one of the boats—get this, Mr. Speaker—follows her into the United States for over 3 miles until she got ashore and finally sought safety with some passerby that was standing there. Then this boat casually goes back into Mexico.

David Hartley was murdered on October 1, 5 weeks ago. The way the current runs in Falcon Lake, his body would have been into the American side in about 2 hours had not someone taken his body out of the water or cut the life preserver off of him or both. His body has never been found.

The Mexican Government quickly accused Tiffany Hartley of being the culprit—the audacity—just to not investigate this case. David Hartley's body has never been found. The perpetrators who murdered him and shot at Tiffany Hartley have never been prosecuted.

A detective by the name of Rolando Flores from Mexico was assigned to investigate this case. He apparently was the only person investigating this case. Soon after he started investigating it, his beheaded body turned up in front of a police station. Mexico quickly decided: We are not investigating the case. And, of course, they have not.

Mexico has an awful track record of solving homicides, not just homicides of Americans in Mexico, but of Mexican nationals who are murdered in the name of selling drugs across that border and bringing them into the United States. So this case has not been solved. I doubt it will ever be because of the ineptitude of the Mexican Government to preserve and defend and protect people in Mexico.

As Sheriff Sigi Gonzalez of Zapata County has said: This area is a trafficking area for drug cartels. The Zeta drug cartels have operational control of parts of that lake and bring drugs into the United States at night.

I went down to Falcon Lake along with Sheriff Gonzalez' people. We went up and down the lake in speed boats. Of course, before we were allowed to get on the boats, we had to make sure that the locals who were taking us there had automatic weapons and everybody was wearing a bulletproof vest. Then we flew up and down the international border of this massive lake, some 60 miles long, almost 8 miles wide.

Interesting to note, Mr. Speaker. The entire time we were on the lake either in a boat or flying over it, we saw no other boats on either side. No Americans are out on the lake. No Mexican

nationals are out on the lake. For 6 hours we toured that lake and we saw no one, and the reason is it is dangerous. People on both sides of the borders don't go on that lake because it is not under the operational control of either Mexico or the United States. It is under the operational control of the Zeta drug cartel. That is a very unfortunate situation.

This is one instance of many where there are places on the international border with the country of Mexico where neither country has operational control of the border, and it is time that we force them to do something about this nonsense that is taking place, the murder of Americans.

Since then, there have been other Americans murdered in Mexico. Have these been crimes solved? Of course those crimes have not been solved.

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We were just hearing comments by the other side about being at war in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is true. We go to war and fight the battles in other countries, Afghanistan and Iraq, we defend the borders of other nations. Maybe it is time we come home and defend our own borders and protect our borders as well as defending borders in Afghanistan and Iraq, because it is the first duty of government to protect the people.

So what do we need? We need more boots on the ground. We need National Guard troops on the ground. We need more Air National Guard, Coast Guard, and we need the help of the Border Patrol to protect the dignity and sovereignty of the United States to keep the drug cartels from bringing that cancer into the United States, because it is the first duty of government to protect the people, and it is about time we protect all the citizens of this country.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SMITH of New Jersey addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)